

introducing a proton conductive functional group to the side chain polymer.

A² 15. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, wherein the polymer is at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, polyvinylchloride, polyvinylidenedichloride, polyvinylflouride, polyvinylidenedifluoride, polytetrafluoroethylene, ethylene-tetrafluoroethylene copolymer, tetrafluoroethylene-perfluoroalkylvinylether copolymer, and tetrafluoroethylene-hexafluoropropylene copolymer.

Please add new Claims 24-26 as follows:

24. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein said oxidative atmosphere comprises oxygen.

A³ 25. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein the precursor membrane comprises an ethylene-tetrafluoroethylene copolymer, the side chain polymer comprises polystyrene, and the proton conductive functional group is sulfonic acid.

26. (New) An electrolyte membrane prepared according to the process of Claim 13.

SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

The amendment to Claim 13 is supported at, e.g., specification at page 7, lines 1-3. New Claim 24 is supported at e.g., specification page 6, second line from the bottom. New Claims 25 and 26 are supported by the specification. See, e.g., the Examples and original Claims 11 and 21. No new matter has been entered.